

Ross Valley
Community Advisory Committee Recommendations
Draft Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan

School Access Element

General Comments and Recommendations:

- High school and college students are a major contributor to traffic congestion in the Ross Valley area. Over 20% of all morning peak-hour auto trips in Marin are home-to-school trips. This population should be targeted and specific programs should be developed to address this unique issue.
- All programs in this category should be funded to the maximum amount with the exception of the School Pool ridesharing program, which should be a part of the Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) program.
- Implementation of projects on the SR2S capital projects priorities list is critical.
- There is a need to define how school access fund priorities would be established. Would the Local Transportation Authority develop a countywide spending plan or would elements of this go back to local jurisdictions for local decision making? How would schools, students, and parents be involved?

Recommendations for Criteria Evaluating Projects and Programs:

- There is a need to involve students, parents and school officials in developing solutions. Decisions should be made locally.

Recommendations for Illustrative Examples of Projects of Local Significance:

- Examples of local priorities include:
 - Crossing Guards at all arterial intersections near schools (highest priority near elementary schools)
 - SR2S capital improvements within one mile of a school
 - Traffic control improvements to relieve congestion near schools (e.g., the Sir Francis Drake High School driveway/Sir Francis Drake Boulevard intersection)
 - Secure Bike Shelters at high schools
 - Quick-fix, visible projects, such as re-striping crosswalks
 - Student bus ticket subsidies

Recommended Funding Allocation: **19%**

Local Streets and Roads Element

General Comments and Recommendations:

- It must be made clear that this element is not for building roads, but for enhancing and maintaining existing infrastructure for all users.

- The Joint Committee should consider changing the name of this category so that it does not sound like a “pothole tax measure.”
- The committee is supportive of a 50-50 split of the allocation for this category between local roads and roads of Countywide Significance.
- The committee is supportive of allowing the DPW directors to develop an annual plan for the countywide road projects; however, local advisory committees should have direct public input into local priorities.

Recommendations for Criteria Evaluating Projects and Programs:

- Projects should consider the needs of all potential users of the roadway by considering recommended improvements of local bicycle and pedestrian plans, the Safe Routes to School capital improvements list, and required ADA improvements.
- Safety enhancements and specific congestion relief should be a priority.
- Projects that can attract matching funds or leverage local dollars should be a priority.

Recommendations for Illustrative Examples of Projects of Local Significance:

- The short list of Roadways of Countywide Significance should be amended to:
 - Add Tamalpais Drive/Madera Boulevard/Tamal Vista Boulevard/Fifer Avenue/Lucky Drive/Doherty Drive (These streets form a high traffic rectangle that connect the southern Ross Valley communities to Highway 101.)
 - Limit Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from Interstate 580 to Nicasio Valley Road
- Other examples of local priorities include:
 - A left-turn pocket on Paradise Drive at Golden Hind Passage
 - Wolfe Grade/Sir Francis Drake Boulevard safety enhancements
 - Safety enhancements at schools along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (e.g., Sir Francis Drake High School, Marin Catholic High School, and Anthony G. Bacich Elementary School)

Recommended Funding Allocation: **34%**

Local Transit Element

General Comments and Recommendations:

- Any service enhancements should focus on route productivity and return on fund investment.
- Golden Gate Transit and the Marin County Transit District should work together to ensure that efficient and cost-effective transit services are provided and operating routes, frequencies, and scheduling are reviewed carefully to meet local needs.
- Late-night transit services are needed for certain industries; however, half-hour frequencies are not necessary. The use of subsidized taxis and smaller buses for such services is encouraged.

Recommendations for Criteria Evaluating Projects and Programs:

- Eligible projects should be evaluated against criteria, such as:
 - Project's ability to manage congestion and increase mobility for the community
 - The project's ability to meet minimum productivity standards
 - The cost-effectiveness of a project to provide service (e.g., late-night subsidized taxis versus 40-foot bus operation)
 - Service enhancements that are based on actual demands/needs

Recommendations for Illustrative Examples of Projects of Local Significance:

- Examples of priorities include:
 - Physical improvements, such as bike racks on buses, weather-protected shelters at bus stops, and safe access improvements to bus stops, to encourage alternative modes to transit
 - Accurate signage and real-time information for riders
 - More frequent service in the San Anselmo Hub-San Rafael Transit Center corridor
 - Ferry connector shuttles

Recommended Funding Allocation: **32%**

Local Return Element

General Comments and Recommendations:

- Local return projects should be determined annually or biannually through a public process that includes a local advisory committee that will oversee all local sales tax expenditures. These committees will be advisory to the local City and Town Councils who must approve the local plans.

Recommendations for Criteria Evaluating Projects and Programs:

- All communities should follow a defined public evaluation process. Eligible projects should be evaluated against criteria, such as:
 - Congestion relief
 - Safety enhancement
 - Improvement to local mobility
 - Ability to leverage outside funds

Recommendations for Illustrative Examples of Projects of Local Significance:

- Funds could be used to augment other Expenditure Plan elements. Examples of priorities include:
 - Capital safety improvements within a mile of schools
 - Pedestrian safety and sidewalk improvements on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard between Oak Manor Drive (Manor Elementary School) and Glen Drive (White Hill Middle School)

- Implementation of recommended improvements in applicable, local bicycle and pedestrian plans and the Safe Routes to School capital improvements list where feasible
- Left-turn pocket on Paradise Drive at Golden Hind Passage
- Roundabout study for the Doherty Drive/Lucky Drive intersection at the east parking lot driveway for Redwood High School
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements on the bridge across Larkspur Creek on Magnolia Avenue
- Bus turnout improvements
- Any traffic flow improvements

Recommended Funding Allocation: **15%**

Additional Comments Recommendations for Other Aspects of the Draft Plan:

- Accountability and Expenditure Plan oversight are critical components. There needs to be a balance between flexibility and ensuring voters that their tax dollars would not be squandered.
- A local advisory committee should be established in all jurisdictions as direct advisors to the City and Town Councils who will make important decisions about these funds.
- The Expenditure Plan should emphasize the very local nature of this tax and that the great majority of funds would be directed back to communities, some projects would be implemented quickly, and projects would manage or reduce congestion. As recommended by the committee, 68% of the funds would go back to local communities for projects and programs in the School Access, Local Streets and Roads, and Local Return elements, while the remaining 32% would support Local Transit operations through Golden Gate Transit.
- It is necessary to make clear that by spending local funds on local projects, there will be additional funding available through State and Federal funding sources for bigger ticket regional projects, including congestion relief on Highway 101. It is very important to voters to know that Highway 101 congestion issues will be addressed through other fund sources.
- The Expenditure Plan needs to recognize the different emphasis and needs in different parts of the County. In Ross Valley, school access and local infrastructure needs are critical.